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Office of the Attorney General

Washington, D. C. 20530

December 2, 1977

Executive Registry

77-10447

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski
Assistant to the President for
National Security Affairs

Warren Christopher
Deputy Secretary of State

Admiral Stansfield Turner
Director, CIA

FROM: J. Michael Kelly
Counselor to the Attorney General

741
FBI Report on
CONTROLLING
CUBAN EXILE
TERRORISTS.

The Attorney General asked me to send to you a copy
of the attached memorandum from the Federal Bureau of
Investigation for your information.

Attachment

FBI REVIEW COMPLETED

(EXECUTIVE REGISTRY)

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : The Attorney General

NOV 29 1977

DATE: November 29, 1977

FROM: *cmk*
Director, FBI

SUBJECT: CUBAN EXILE TERRORISM

Enclosed for your information is a letterhead memorandum updating efforts being taken by the FBI against Cuban exile terrorists.

You may wish to furnish copies of enclosed memorandum to the White House, Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency.

Enclosure





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

November 29, 1977

CUBAN EXILE TERRORISM

The following analysis and synthesis is outlined for your information and assistance.

Violent actions by Cuban exile terrorists within the United States were down 65% to date in 1977, as compared to 1976, and down 83% when compared to 1975. There were eight terrorist actions claimed by Cuban exile terrorists in 1977, compared to twenty-three in 1976, and forty-seven similar actions in 1975. This represents the lowest yearly total of terrorist actions claimed by Cuban exiles recorded in the seven-year period, 1970 to 1977. Although acts of terrorism by Cuban exiles traditionally increased in the past whenever peaceful coexistence with Cuba was discussed, the dramatic drop occurred despite efforts by the United States Government to normalize relations with Cuba.

Contributing to that decrease are the aggressive and penetrating criminal investigations conducted by the FBI into past terrorism, coordinated investigations with other Federal and local agencies into ongoing conspiracies to carry out violent actions, and stringent measures taken by this Bureau to deter such actions in conformance with the U. S. Government policy for more effective measures against Cuban exile terrorists, consistent with the law.

Our investigative efforts, together with Federal Grand Jury proceedings in Miami, Florida, and Washington, D. C., have served notice on the action cadre of the Cuban



Cuban Exile Terrorism

exile terrorist movement that their leadership within that movement has been recognized and that their terrorist conspiracies will be vigorously investigated and speedily prosecuted.

The Miami, Florida, Cuban exile terrorist action cadre has been the subject of intensive investigation and Federal Grand Jury scrutiny in connection with the July 23, 1976, assassination of a Cuban official in Merida, Mexico, which was allegedly perpetrated by three exiles from Miami; namely, Gaspar Jimenez Escobedo, Orestes Ruiz Hernandez, and Gustavo Castillo. Orestes Ruiz Hernandez and Gaspar Jimenez were arrested immediately after the killing by Mexican Police, while Gustavo Castillo was able to escape. In January, 1977, Castillo was apprehended by FBI Agents in Puerto Rico on a material witness warrant which ordered his appearance before the Federal Grand Jury meeting in Miami, Florida. Following his appearance before the Federal Grand Jury and his subsequent trial on local bombing charges, Castillo was released. In March, 1977, Gaspar Jimenez escaped from a Mexican Federal Prison and has returned to the United States. In November, 1977, the Mexican Government initiated extradition requests for Castillo and Jimenez, at the persistent urging of this Bureau and the Criminal Division of the Department through the offices of the Department of State.

Another significant investigation in the Miami, Florida, area which has been instrumental in disrupting the Cuban exile terrorist movement was the coordinated FBI/U. S. Customs Service investigation into the conspiracy to attack Cuban patrol boats off the Cuban coast during this past summer. Four subjects, including Armando Lopez Estrada, the military coordinator of the Association of the Veterans of the Bay of Pigs, Brigade 2506, and a reported member of the Cuban exile terrorist group, Coordination of United Revolutionary Organizations (CORU), were indicted in Miami in October, 1977, as a result of that coordinated investigation.

Cuban Exile Terrorism

The January, 1977, arrest of Gustavo Castillo mentioned above, together with the penetrative FBI investigation into two bombings which occurred on August 24, 1976, in San Jose, Costa Rica, have seriously shaken Cuban exile terrorist elements in Puerto Rico. At the time of his arrest, Castillo was actually meeting in a CORU safe house in Puerto Rico with CORU action cadre members, including its widely known leader Frank Castro.

Puerto Rican resident Rene Fernandez Del Valle and his wife, flew out of San Jose, Costa Rica, at the same time two bombs exploded in that city. Fernandez is an alleged CORU action cadre member and close associate of Frank Castro. Castro subsequently told a Costa Rican official that a "CORU" commando from Puerto Rico was responsible for the August 24, 1976, bombings. Penetrative, aggressive investigation is being conducted by the Bureau in an attempt to collect evidence linking Fernandez Del Valle to the Costa Rican bombings.

The Cuban exile terrorist contingent in the New York Metropolitan area has been weakened by FBI investigation and Grand Jury hearings into the September 21, 1976, slaying of former Chilean Ambassador, Orlando Letelier. As a result of this investigation, Jose Dionisio Suarez, whose presence had been reported in the founding meeting of CORU in June, 1976, in the Dominican Republic, has been jailed for contempt after being granted immunity and thereafter failing to testify before the Grand Jury. Another Cuban exile terrorist leader in the New York Metropolitan area, Guillermo Novo Sampol, is currently being sought as a Federal fugitive for violating conditions of parole.

In order to continue implementation of the policy of more effective measures against Cuban exile terrorists, consistent with the law, additional manpower and resources were committed. You are assured that the FBI will continue its aggressive posture in its efforts to eradicate terrorism by Cuban exiles.